

# MADD Safe Party Guide

## **Social Host Responsibility.**

Though an unfamiliar term a decade ago, today we recognize this phrase as encompassing everything from planning the party menu to assessing how guests will get home safely once the party is over.

Your role as a responsible party host can prevent your friends and loved ones from becoming the next alcohol-related statistic!

## **PLANNING A PARTY**

As a host, you want your guests to enjoy themselves. Here are a few pointers to ensure that your guests will have fun ... and live to remember it!

- Invite guests who are compatible so that no one feels left out of the crowd. Lonely or unfriendly people often drink to excess.
- Plan lots of group activities -- like party games.
- Prepare plenty of foods so guests will not drink on empty stomachs.
- Avoid too many salty snacks, which tend to make people thirsty and drink more.
- Offer a variety of non-alcoholic beverages for the designated driver and others who prefer not to drink alcohol.
- Do not push drinks!!! Drinking at a party is not mandatory for having a good time.
- If preparing an alcoholic punch, use a non-carbonated base like fruit juice. Alcohol is absorbed into the blood stream faster with a carbonated base.
- Ask guests to appoint a designated driver before the evening begins. This person drinks only non-alcoholic beverages to ensure that friends or loved ones get home safely.
- Be honest when inviting guests who are known to drink to excess. Tell them that drinking and driving is unacceptable at your party. Get their agreement to find alternate modes of transportation.

## **OFFICE PARTIES**

- Arrange for discounted or complimentary rooms when a party is held at a hotel so employees won't drive home impaired.
- Hire a shuttle or limousine service to provide transportation for those that have been drinking. Promote the designated driver concept and these alternate forms of transportation in party invitations.
- Do not push drinks!!!
- If you provide an open bar, be sure the bartender has had server training to prevent over-serving or serving guests under the legal drinking age.
- Hold a contest for employees to create non-alcoholic drink recipes. Serve the winner's drinks at the party.
- Schedule activities or entertainment to keep the focus away from drinking.

## **DURING YOUR PARTY**

- Never serve alcohol to someone under the legal drinking age, and never ask children to serve alcohol at parties.
- Don't let guests mix their own drinks. Choosing a reliable "bartender" will help you keep track of the size and number of drinks that guests consume.
- Never force a drink on a guest!!!
- Close the bar 90 minutes before the party ends ... and serve a great dessert treat with coffee. Remember, only time sobers someone who has been drinking.
- If, despite your efforts, some of your guests have had too much to drink, drive them home, arrange for a ride with another guest who is sober, call a taxi, or invite them to stay over.

## **Myths and Facts about Alcohol & Driving**

**Myth:** Coffee can sober up someone who has had too much to drink.

**Fact:** Only time sobers. It takes about one hour to oxidize each drink.

**Myth:** Hard liquor is more intoxicating than beer or wine.

**Fact:** A 12-ounce can of beer, a five-ounce glass of wine, and a 12-ounce wine cooler contain the same amount of alcohol and the same intoxication potential as an ounce- and-a-half of liquor.

**Myth:** Someone who has had too much to drink will look intoxicated.

**Fact:** Someone's physical appearance can be misleading. One drink can impair someone's ability to drive. Judgment is the first thing affected when someone has been drinking and important motor skills are next.

## **WHAT YOU CAN DO**

*How do I approach one of my guests who has had too much to drink? I mean, I don't want to lose a friend.*

The first time is the hardest, but your actions could save your friend's life or that of an innocent victim. Pull your guest aside and politely, but firmly, tell them that you cannot let them drive home because you care. Offer to let the guest spend the night, call a cab or ask another, sober guest to drive the intoxicated person home.

*How will I be held responsible if one of my guests is involved in a crash?*

The laws vary from state to state, but you could be held responsible for the costs associated with the crash including medical bills and property damage and be sued for emotional pain and suffering.

## **WHAT CAN I DO TO STOP DRUNK DRIVING?**

- Be a responsible party host by following the tips in this brochure.
- Support measures to strengthen drunk driving and victims' rights laws by contacting elected officials.
- Tie a MADD ribbon to a visible location on your vehicle as a symbol of your commitment to drive safe and sober during the holidays and as a sign for others to do the same.
- Write letters to the editor of local newspapers expressing your concern over the drunk driving problem in your community.
- Get involved -- become a volunteer for your local MADD chapter.

## **WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I SEE SOMEONE DRIVING DRUNK?**

Report drunk drivers immediately to area law enforcement from a car phone or pay phone with the license plate number, description of the vehicle and the direction in which it was traveling.

## **HOW TO SPOT A DRUNK DRIVER**

These warning signs should be your signal to take down a license plate number and vehicle description to report to the proper authorities. Do not attempt to stop the vehicle.

- Wide turns
- Straddling lanes or driving on the center line
- Drifting or moving in a straight line at a slight angle to the roadway
- Driving with headlights off at night
- Appearing to be drunk (i.e., eye fixation, face close to windshield, drinking in the vehicle)
- Driving below the speed limit
- Erratic braking or stopping without cause
- Slow response to traffic signals (sudden stop, delayed start)
- Nearly striking an object, curb, etc.
- Weaving or zigzagging across the road
- Driving on the wrong side of the road or completely off the roadway
- Tailgating
- Accelerating or decelerating rapidly